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MENOMINEE INDIAN TRIBE OF WISCONSIN

P.O. Box 910
Keshena, WI 54135-0910

June 23, 2006

Betty Gould, Regulation Officer
Division of Regulatory Affairs, Records
Access and Policy Liaison
Indian Health Services
801 Thompson Avenue, Suite 450
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Ms. Betty Gould:

SUBJECT: Comments on Section 506, MMA, 2003-Medicare Like Rates Provision

On behalf of Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin, I write to respectfully request your support for the American Indian / Alaska Native (AI / AN) Medicare Provision. Menominee appreciates this opportunity to comment on "*Section 506 of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003-Limitation on Charges for Services Furnished by Medicare Participating Inpatient Hospitals to Indians,*" as published in the Federal Register/Vol. 71 No. 82/ Friday. April 28, 2006.

We support the implementation of the proposed rule. Wisconsin Tribally Operated Health Programs, Area Health Boards, the Indian Health Services, and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have all done extensive review of this rule and potential outcomes. They have all determined that extending Medicare Like rates to the Indian Health Services/Tribally Operated Health Programs/Urban Program (I/T/U) will have a noticeable positive effect on many of the I/T/U programs which operate at approximately 40% of Level of Need Funded presently in the Bemidji Area.

Again, we appreciate this opportunity for comment and do support the proposed rules as published. Should you have questions regarding this matter, please contact Mr. Jerry Waukau, Health Administrator of Menominee Tribal Clinic, at 715-799-5482.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karen Washinawatok".

Karen Washinawatok,
Tribal Chairperson

C: File